UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1994/1204
22 October 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 18 OCTOBER 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TUNISIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the pleasure, as Chairman of the Arab Group for October 1994, to transmit to you herewith, at the request of the Group, the text of a letter concerning the situation in Somalia and the importance of a continued United Nations presence there to prevent a renewed deterioration of security conditions and facilitate national reconciliation among the different Somali factions.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Slaheddine ABDELLAH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter from the Arab Group to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Arab Group, referring to the resolution on the situation in Somalia adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its 102nd ordinary session, feels it necessary, after an extensive review and an in-depth study of that situation, to communicate to you its concerns regarding this matter:

1. In taking this initiative, the Group wishes to express its profound appreciation to the international community for its commitment, its generosity and its patience in dealing with the crisis in Somalia, thus warding off a major human crisis.

2. The Arab Group considers that, in spite of the slow pace observed in achieving national reconciliation and in finding a political solution, some perceptible progress has been achieved in the decline in fighting among factions and the greater inclination of their leaders towards negotiation. In view of these favourable, albeit slow, developments and the likelihood that a sudden, total withdrawal of the United Nations forces from Somalia might create a void that would lead to a new flare-up of war in the country, the Arab Group strongly recommends proceeding on the basis of the following principles:

- The mission of the United Nations forces in Somalia, namely to ensure a stable environment favourable to humanitarian activities and conducive to a suitable political solution, should be continued;

- Any withdrawal of the United Nations forces from Somalia must take place gradually, in successive stages, so as to enable the Somali leaders to overcome their differences and form a central authority;

- A political mission must be sent by the Security Council as soon as possible to apprise the Somali people of the Council's view regarding the future of the United Nations forces in Somalia and the need to speed up the process of reconciliation. The mission, moreover, must be sent before the Security Council takes any further decision regarding the future of the peace-keeping forces in Somalia;

- In conjunction with a gradual reduction of the United Nations forces in Somalia, available funds must be employed to raise the country's economic and social level, to rebuild, to continue the reconciliation process and to arrive at a political solution;

- The Somali leaders must, without any further delay, hold an expanded conference on reconciliation to constitute a critical turning-point in the reconciliation process;

- The United Nations must redouble its efforts to encourage national reconciliation and arrive at a political solution in Somalia. To that end, it must coordinate its efforts with those of the central dispute-settlement structure of the Organization of African Unity, neighbouring States and the League of Arab States.

3. The Arab Group strongly feels the need at this stage for a continued United Nations presence to ensure the future of Somalia. The tragic experience of Rwanda following the abrupt reduction of international forces there should be a sufficient lesson to the international community. Additional efforts must therefore be made to prevent any escalation of tension in Somalia.

4. The Arab Group appeals to the Security Council to extend the mission of the international forces in Somalia, in an initial stage, to the end of March 1995 and urges the international community as a whole to assist in the reconciliation process during this period. It wishes to emphasize the need for Somali leaders to cooperate with the international community in the endeavour to find a solution to the crisis in Somalia and to make every effort to arrive at an acceptable political solution in the shortest possible time.

5. The Arab Group reaffirms its commitment to striving in every conceivable way, in a spirit of cooperation, coordination and joint endeavour, to assist the United Nations in its efforts in that direction. It is essential, in the present situation, to endeavour to avert chaos and help create a civil society. The responsibility for averting violence and chaos and constituting a national government belongs first and foremost to the Somalis themselves. It is the task of the international community to extend a helping hand to assist them in achieving those goals.